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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

PATDOCTC@fr.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/628,561

Applicant(s)

SCHULZ ET AL.

Examiner

THOMAS MANSFIELD

Art Unit

3624

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14, 16, 18-22, 37 and 38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14, 16, 18-22, 37, and 38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB088)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 22 January 2009.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Final Office action is in reply to the response to applicant amendment filed on 8 December 2008.
2. Claims 1, 6-13, and 16 have been amended.
3. Claims 15, 17, and 23-36 have been cancelled.
4. Claims 37 and 38 are new and have been added.
5. Claims 1-14, 16, 18-22, 37, and 38 are currently pending and have been examined.

Response to Amendment

6. In the previous office action, Claims 1-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Although the Applicant amended Claim 1 to recite a persistent storage, the amendment is not sufficient to tie the subject matter to a statutory class. Therefore, the rejection is maintained and further explained below.
7. Applicants' amendment necessitated a new grounds of rejection.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 8 December 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
9. Applicant submits that Du et al (Du) (U.S. 6,041,306) in view of Wil M.P. van der Aalst (Aalst), "Process-Oriented Architectures for Electronic Commerce and Interorganizational Workflow", Information Systems Vol. 24, No. 8, pp. 639-671, 1999 does not teach or suggest in amended Claim 1: (1) a first private workflow...implemented by a first party" and "a different, second private workflow implemented by a second party" [see Remarks page 11, first five sentences].

10. With regard to argument (1), the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Aalst teaches a first private workflow (each business partner has a private workflow process)...implemented by a first party" and "a different, second private workflow implemented by a second party" (since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1) see at least page 640, last paragraph all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

11. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

12. Claims 1-14, 16, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claim 1 is directed toward the statutory category of a process. In order for a claimed process to be patentable subject matter under 35 U.S.C. § 101, it must either: (1) be tied to a particular machine, or (2) transform a particular article to a different state or thing. See *In Re Bilski*, 88 U.S.P.Q.2d 1385 (2008); *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972). If neither of these requirements is met by the claim, the method/process is not patentable subject matter under § 101. Thus, to qualify as a statutory process under § 101, the claim should positively recite the machine to which it is tied (e.g. by identifying the apparatus that accomplishes the method steps), or positively recite the subject matter that

is being transformed (e.g. by identifying the material that is being changed to a different state). Nominal recitations of structure in an otherwise ineligible method fail to make the method a statutory process. *See Benson*, 409 U.S. at 71-72. Thus, incidental physical limitations such as insignificant extra-solution activity and field of use limitations are not sufficient to convert an otherwise ineligible process into a statutory one.

Here, the claimed process fails to meet the above requirements for patentability under § 101 because it is not tied to a particular machine and does not transform underlying subject matter. Although Claim 1 has been amended to include a persistent storage, it is not clear how the data is kept persistently in storage. Likewise, it is also not clear how the accepting, representing, ordering, adding, and logging steps are accomplished. Claims 2-14, 16, and 18-22 are rejected for the same rational since they depend from Claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. Claims 1-14, 16, 18-22, 37, and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Du et al (Du) (U.S. 6,052,684) in view of Wil M.P. van der Aalst (Aalst), "Process-Oriented Architectures for Electronic Commerce and Interorganizational Workflow", Information Systems Vol. 24, No. 8, pp. 639-671, 1999.

With regard to Claims 1, 37, and 38, Du teaches a *method, system, and computer-readable medium of building a combined workflow* (a workflow process management (WFPM) system **10** implemented in a network **11** of computer systems, being accomplished by computer software) (see at least column 4, lines 9-33) *comprising:*

- *accepting a workflow* (each workflow process **18**) *into a first tier (c1) of a multi-tiered workflow model* (multiple activities potentially performed in parallel, "superstructure"), *the first workflow comprising a first plurality of tasks* (sequence of activities or action) *implemented by a first party* (an associated user **14a-b**) (see at least column 4, lines 34-51 and Figure 5).
- *accepting a second workflow into the first tier of the multi-tiered workflow model* (multiple activities potentially performed in parallel, "superstructure"), *the second workflow* (each workflow process **18**) *comprising a second plurality of tasks* (sequence of activities or action) *and being associated with a second party* (an associated user **14a-b**) (see at least column 4, lines 34-51).
- *abstracting the first workflow and the second workflow* (two groups (modeled as two work nodes **a1** and **a2**)) *in a second tier (c1) of the multi-tiered model to provide respective first and second abstracted non-confidential workflow views of the first and second private workflows to the second party and the first party, respectively*, (product design project), *the first workflow abstracted view including a first plurality of grouping* (mechanical component) *of the first plurality of tasks, and the second abstracted workflow view including a second plurality of*

groupings (electrical component) of the *second plurality of tasks* (see at least column 8, lines 22-59).

- *ordering the first plurality of groupings and the second plurality of groupings* (the two groups) *from the first and second, different workflows into a single combined workflow* (work nodes, product design project) *in a third tier (c3) of the multi-tiered workflow model* (merging it with the other component design in the action database) (see at least column 6, lines 38-64 and column 8, lines 22-59 and Figure 5), *the combined workflow being shared by the first party and the second party and having a task order* (list of required changes) *that, when executed, provides a desired result of a business collaboration* (COMPLETE, INCOMPLETE) *between the first party and the second party* (with multiple activities potentially performed in parallel, overall product design) (see at least column 4, lines 45-48 and column 8, lines 22-59).
- *adding ordering tasks* (work nodes, two major components) *to the combined workflow, the ordering tasks being operable to implement the order of the combined workflow and thereby achieve the desired result* (modeled as work nodes a3 and a4, if it is complete, incomplete) (see at least column 6, lines 38-64 and column 8, lines 22-59 and Figure 5).
- *logging* (log-based, logging) *interactions between the first party and the second party during execution of the combined workflow, in a persistent storage* (log manager 70) (see at least column 7, lines 6-43).

Du does not specifically teach a private workflow, comprising confidential plurality of tasks. Aalst teaches *private workflow comprising confidential* (hidden) plurality of tasks in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

Du does not specifically teach *representing the first private workflow as a first matrix in which the first plurality of tasks are each represented as first vertices, where values of the first vertices within the first matrix are determined by first dependencies between the first plurality of tasks*. Aalst teaches *representing the first private workflow* (private workflow) *as a first matrix* (tuple) *in which the first plurality of tasks* (send order, notify, delivery) *are each represented as first vertices, where values of the first vertices within the first matrix are determined by first dependencies between the first plurality of tasks* (invoice, payment) in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each local workflow process is private, i.e., the corresponding business partner has full control over the local part of the workflow" (see at least pages 649-650 and 659 through top of page 664, Definition of CT-IOWF).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of allowing business partners to be involved within a global workflow process (Aalst, pages 659, last paragraph).

Du does not specifically teach *representing the second private workflow as a second matrix wherein each of the second plurality of tasks are represented as second vertices, where values of the second vertices within the second matrix are determined by second dependencies between the second plurality of tasks*. Aalst teaches *representing the second private workflow* (private workflow) as a second matrix (tuple) wherein each of the second plurality of tasks (send order, notify, delivery) are represented as second vertices, where values of the second vertices within the second matrix are determined by second dependencies between the second plurality of tasks (invoice, payment) in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each local workflow process is private, i.e., the corresponding business partner has full control over the local part of the workflow" (see at least pages 649-650 and 659 through top of page 664, Definition of CT-IOWF).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of allowing business partners to be involved within a global workflow process (Aalst, pages 659, last paragraph).

With regard to Claim 2, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises forming a sequential flow which interleaves implementation (rule nodes) of the first plurality of tasks and the second plurality of tasks (workflow process 18)* (see at least column 6, line 38 through column 7, lines 1-24).

With regard to Claim 3, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises forming a parallel flow of a first task within the first plurality of tasks and a second task within the second plurality of tasks (with multiple activities potentially performed in parallel)* (see at least column 4, lines 45-56).

With regard to Claim 4, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding at least one of conjunctive (Forward arcs) splitting and joining tasks which specify the task order* (see at least column 6, lines 21-33).

With regard to Claim 5, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding at least one of alternative (reset arcs) splitting and joining tasks which specify the task order* (see at least column 6, line 21 through column 7, lines 1-24).

With regard to Claim 6, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding a first splitting task (Initial 160) which designates that a first task within the first workflow is followed by a first following task (Active 163) and a second following task (Completed 178, Compensation 171)* (see at least column 13, lines 19-29 and FIG. 9). However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 7, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding the first following task as a second task within the second workflow* (see at least column 13, lines 19-29 and FIG. 9). However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 8, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding the first following task as a first joining task (Active state 163), the first joining task designating a second task within the second workflow as following the first joining task and the first splitting task (Active state 163 or Compensation state 171) (see at least column 13, lines 19-29 and FIG. 9).* However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 9, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding a second splitting task (Active 163) following the second task within the second workflow, the second splitting task designating that the second task is followed by a third following task (Compensation 171) and a fourth following task (Completed 178, Suspended Compensation 175) (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9).* However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 10, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding the third following task as the second following task, the second following task being a second joining task within the first workflow that designates that a third task within the first workflow follows the second following task* (suspended compensation states) (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9). However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 11, Du teaches *wherein adding ordering tasks comprises adding the fourth following task (Suspended Compensation 175) as a third joining task within the second workflow, the third joining task designating that a fourth task (Completed 178) within the second workflow follows the third joining task and the third task within the first workflow* (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9). However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 12, Du teaches *wherein a second ordering task is a joining task which designates a fourth task (Suspended Compensation 175) within the second workflow, the fourth task following the second task within the combined workflow* (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9). However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 13, Du teaches:

- *adding a third task (Suspended Active 168) within the first workflow as the second following task (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9).*
- *adding a second joining task within the first workflow as the third following task (Compensation 171), the second joining task designating that a fourth task within the first workflow follows the third following task (Active 163, Completed 178) (see at least column 13, lines 19-63 and FIG. 9).*

However, Du does not specifically teach *private workflow*. Aalst teaches *private workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "each business partner has a private workflow process, since every business partner has its own private workflow, Producer, Supplier 1" (see at least page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16 and page 667, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a loosely coupled architecture (LCA) uses a horizontal decomposition where the process itself is partitioned (Aalst, page 640, last paragraph, all of page 662 and Fig. 16).

With regard to Claim 14, Du teaches *wherein ordering the first plurality of tasks comprises inputting the task order from an operator* (workflow process designer 22a-c) (see at least column 5, line 48).

With regard to Claim 16, Du does not specifically teach *inserting the first matrix and the second matrix into a third matrix; modifying a selected value within the third matrix, thereby reflecting a construction or removal of a selected dependency between two vertices within the first plurality of tasks, consistent with the task order; adding a fourth vertex before a first of the two vertices, the fourth vertex having a first chosen value reflecting a first new dependency between the fourth vertex and the first of the two vertices; and adding a fifth vertex after the first of the two vertices, the fifth vertex having a second chosen value reflecting a second new dependency between the fifth vertex and the first of the two vertices*. Aalst teaches *inserting the first matrix and the second matrix into a third matrix* (tuple CL-IOWF = (B, WFsub1, WFsub2, ...WFsubn, PsubM, send receive); *modifying a selected value within the third matrix (m), thereby reflecting a construction or removal of a selected dependency between two vertices within the first plurality of tasks, consistent with the task order; adding a fourth vertex before a first of the two vertices, the fourth vertex having a first chosen value reflecting a first new dependency between the fourth vertex and the first of the two vertices; and adding a fifth vertex after the first of the two vertices, the fifth vertex having a second chosen value reflecting a second new dependency between the fifth vertex and the first of the two vertices* ($m \in PsubM$: send (m) (see at least pages 659-666) in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "...a loosely coupled architecture (LCA)" (see at least pages 659-666, under heading, 6. LOOSELY COUPLED).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of asynchronous partitioned workflows (Aalst, pages 659-666, under heading, 6. LOOSELY COUPLED).

With regard to Claim 17, Du does not specifically teach *wherein the first workflow is an abstracted workflow associated with a first actual workflow of the first party, and further wherein a confidential nature of the first actual workflow is protected by use of the abstracted workflow in constructing the combined workflow*. Aalst teaches *wherein the first workflow is an abstracted workflow associated with a first actual workflow of the first party, and further wherein a confidential nature of the first actual workflow is protected by use of the abstracted workflow in constructing the combined workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "...projection inheritance conforms to hiding or abstracting from tasks new in x) (see page 655, third paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of increased security or privacy between collaborative workflows (Aalst, page 655, third paragraph)

With regard to Claim 18, Du does not specifically teach *selecting a subset of the combined workflow for execution by the first party*. Aalst teaches *selecting a subset of the combined workflow for execution by the first party* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "The common workflow can be seen as a superclass and the local workflows can be seen as subclasses of this superclass" (see page 655, second paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit that inheritance notions could be useful (Aalst, page 655, second paragraph).

With regard to Claim 19, Du does not specifically teach *determining that the subset includes a third plurality of tasks, each consecutive pair of the third plurality of tasks connected by a dependency*. Aalst teaches *determining that the subset includes a third plurality of tasks, each consecutive pair of the third plurality of tasks connected by a dependency* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "...x can do what y can do with respect to the tasks present in y" (see page 655, third paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit that inheritance solves the problems encountered during adaptive workflows in a collaborative process (Aalst, page 655, first paragraph).

With regard to Claim 20, Du does not specifically teach *wherein selecting a subset comprises determining that a last task within the third plurality of tasks precedes at most one subsequent task within the combined workflow*. Aalst teaches *determining that a last task within the third plurality of tasks precedes at most one subsequent task within the combined workflow* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "...x can do what y can do with respect to the tasks present in y" (see page 655, third paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of controlled task dependency during adaptive workflows in a collaborative process (Aalst, page 655, third paragraph).

With regard to Claim 21, Du does not specifically teach *determining that no internal task within the third plurality of tasks, exclusive of the last task, immediately precedes an external task that is not included within the third plurality of tasks*. Aalst teaches *determining that no internal task within the third plurality of tasks, exclusive of the last task, immediately precedes an external task that is not included within the third plurality of tasks* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "A trigger is an external condition which leads to the execution of an enabled task" (see at least page 653, first paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of a control feature during adaptive workflows in a collaborative process (Aalst, page 655, first paragraph).

With respect to Claim 22, Du does not specifically teach *determining that no internal task within the third plurality of tasks, exclusive of a first task of the third plurality of tasks, immediately succeeds an external task that is not included within the third plurality of tasks*. Aalst teaches *determining that no internal task within the third plurality of tasks, exclusive of a first task of the third plurality of tasks, immediately succeeds an external task that is not included within the third plurality of tasks* in analogous art of global transaction support for workflow management systems for the purposes of, "For distinguishing x and y under protocol inheritance all tasks present in x but not in y are blocked. The new tasks are simply disallowed to be executed" (see at least page 655, third paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the process-oriented architectures for electronic commerce and interorganizational workflow as taught by Aalst in the distributed workflow management system as disclosed by Du. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of hiding or abstracting from new tasks in the external task (Aalst, page 655, third paragraph).

15. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
- A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

16. The following prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:
- Parsonnet et al. (U.S. 7,184,966) discloses systems and methods for remote role-based collaborative work environment.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THOMAS MANSFIELD whose telephone number is (571)270-1904. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8:30 am-6 pm, alt. Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bradley Bayat can be reached on 571-272-6704. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/T. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 3624

13 March 2009
Thomas Mansfield

/Bradley B Bayat/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3624